



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/055,100	01/22/2002	Jason Albert Reading	74577-034	9635
21890	7590	02/27/2009	EXAMINER	
PROSKAUER ROSE LLP			TIV, BACKHEAN	
PATENT DEPARTMENT			ART UNIT	
1585 BROADWAY			PAPER NUMBER	
NEW YORK, NY 10036-8299			2451	
			MAIL DATE	
			DELIVERY MODE	
			02/27/2009	
			PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/055,100

Applicant(s)

READING ET AL.

Examiner

BACKHEAN TIV

Art Unit

2451

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on RCE12/17/08.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 42,45-55,57,59-67,69,72-81,83 and 85 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-41,43,44,56,58,68,70,71,82,84,86 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 42,45-55,57,59-67,69,72-81,83 and 85 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Detailed Action

Claims 42,45-55, 57, 59-67, 69,72-81,83,85 are pending in this application. Claims 1-41,43,44,56,58,68,70,71,82,84,86 have been cancelled. This is a response to the RCE filed on 12/17/08.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 42,45-55, 57, 59-67, 69,72-81,83,85 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,041,306 issued to Du et al.(Du) in view of US Patent 5,987,422 issued to Buzzsaki in further view of Admitted Prior Art (APA) in further view of US Patent 5,754,857 issued to Gadol.

As per claim 81, Du teaches an automated method for processing a workflow among a plurality of activity computers, the method comprising, at each activity computer among the plurality of activity computers(Fig.10, the steps of: the workflow packet corresponding to an activity defined in the sequence of activities for the workflow(col.4, lines 34-41); performing the activity corresponding to the retrieved workflow packet(col.4, lines 34-41); determining a next activity in the sequence of activities for the workflow from the workflow transition information(col.1, lines 56-64); wherein the next activity is capable of being performed by the activity server, performing

the next activity without requesting a next workflow packet from the workflow queue(col.4, lines 34-41).

Du however does not explicitly teach obtaining workflow transition information from a common database, the workflow transition information defining a sequence of a plurality of activities for a workflow; retrieving a workflow packet from a workflow queue maintained in the common database and processing of workflow by a server.

Du, however does teach that Workflow Process management(WFPM) system defining and manages flow of a work process. It can assign resources to work, determine which steps will be executed next within a work process and when they will be executed. They can notify resources about pending work, enforce administrative policies, such as access control and track execution and support user inquiries of status. They can also provide history information in form of an audit trail for completed workflow processes and collect statistical data for process and resource bottleneck analysis, flow optimization and automatic workload balancing(col.1, lines 55-col.2, lines 5).

Buzsaki teaches obtaining workflow transition information from a common database, the workflow transition information defining a sequence of a plurality of activities for a workflow; retrieving a workflow packet from a workflow queue maintained in the common database (col.6, lines 12-45, col.7, lines 19-57, col.11, lines 35-44).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Du to explicitly include obtaining workflow transition information from a common database, the workflow transition information

defining a sequence of a plurality of activities for a **workflow**; retrieving a **workflow** packet from a **workflow** queue maintained in the common database as taught by Buzsaki in order to perform flexible **workflow** process execution in a **workflow** management system.

One ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings of Du and Buzsaki to perform flexible **workflow** process execution in a **workflow** management system.

APA teaches processing of **workflow** by an activity server(applicant's specification, page2, lines 17-23) .

Therefore it would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Du in view of Buzsaki to include processing of **workflow** by an activity server as taught by APA in order to accomplish business tasks.

One ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings of Du, Buzsaki, and APA in order to accomplish business tasks.

Du in view of Buzsaki in view of APA does not explicitly teach wherein the next activity is incapable of being performed by the activity server, forming at the activity server the next **workflow** packet corresponding to the next activity; and forwarding the next **workflow** packet to the **workflow** queue for retrieval by another activity server capable of performing the next activity.

Gadol teaches in a **workflow** there are several task in which different departments handle different parts of the **workflow**(col.1, lines 12-col.2, lines 39;the manager approves travel requests, the corporate travel departments makes the travel

arrangements, the manager is unable/incapable to perform the next activity that is why is forwarded to the corporate travel department). It is obvious to use the methodology of sending a task that can't be performed from one department to another department and apply it to use in a server based system.

Therefore it would have been obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Du view of Buzsaki in further view of APA to include transmitting a task that can not be performed from a department to another department that can perform the task as taught by Gadol in order to complete a workflow(Gadol, col.1, lines 1-45).

One ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings of Du, Buzsaki, APA, and Gadol in order to complete a workflow(Gadol, col.1, lines 1-45).

As per claim 42, the method of claim 81, wherein said workflow packet includes a process state(Du, col.4, lines 34-41).

As per claim 45, the method of claim 81, wherein at least one of said plurality of activity servers performs more than one of said plurality of activities(Du, col.4, lines 34-41).

As per claim 46, the method of claim 81, wherein at least one of said plurality of activities is an automatic activity(Du, col.4, lines 34-41).

As per claim 47, the method of claim 81, wherein at least one of said plurality of activities is a manual activity for receiving a user input(Buzsaki, Abstract). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claim 48, the method of claim 47, wherein said manual activity manages a user interface(Du, Fig.1, Buzsaki, Abstract, Fig.13). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claim 49, the method of claim 81, wherein more than one of said plurality of activities is a manual activity and said more than one of said plurality of activities are aggregated in one of said plurality of activity servers(Buzsaki, col.6, lines 12-45). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claim 50, the method of claim 49, wherein said one of said plurality of activity servers interfaces with a desktop server for providing a user interface to a user(Du, Fig.1, Buzsaki, Fig.13). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claim 51, the method of claim 81, wherein at least one of said plurality of activities is performed by more than one of said plurality of activity servers(Du, col.4, lines 34-41).

As per claim 52, the method of claim 81, further comprising the steps of: receiving an event notification requesting that said workflow be processed; and initiating said workflow in response to the event notification(Buzsaki, col.6, lines 12-45). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claim 53, the method of claim 81, wherein said workflow transition information includes a routing transition(Du, col.6, lines 13-65, Buzsaki, Abstract, Fig.3-13). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claim 54, the method of claim 53, further comprising the step of: performing more than one of said plurality of activities and more than one routing

transition in a single transaction in one of said plurality of activity servers(Du, col.6, lines 13-65, Buzsaki, Abstract, Fig.3-13). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claim 55, the method of claim 81, wherein said workflow transition information includes a route number, a node number, a routing transition and a next node number(Du, col.6, lines 13-65, Buzsaki, Abstract, Fig.3-13). Motivation to combine set forth in claim 81.

As per claims 57,59-67,69,72-80,83,85, do not teach or further define over the limitations in claims 42,45-55,81 . Therefore claims 57,59-67,69,72-80,83,85 are rejected for the same reasons set forth above.

Response to Arguments

All previous objections/rejections are withdrawn due to applicant's amendments.

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 42,45-55, 57, 59-67, 69,72-81,83,85 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Examiner's Note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing

responses, to fully consider the references in its entirety as potentially teaching of all or part of the claimed invention.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Backhean Tiv whose telephone number is (571) 272-5654. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30-3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Follansbee can be reached on (571) 272-3964. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Application/Control Number: 10/055,100

Page 9

Art Unit: 2451

Backhean Tiv

Examiner, Art Unit 2451

2/20/09

/John Follansbee/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2451